

White House spokesman says

Nixon will take whatever action necessary in Vietnam

WASHINGTON (AP) — A White House spokesman declared Monday that President Nixon will "take whatever action is necessary to thwart this invasion" of South Vietnam by North Vietnamese forces.

Press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler had this word for newsmen a few hours after Secretary of State William P. Rogers had told senators bombing of the Haiphong and Hanoi areas was essential to protection of American troops and to Nixon's over-all Vietnamization program.

At his afternoon briefing, Ziegler referred reporters to Rogers's

remarks and said the secretary was speaking for the President. Meanwhile, the State Department replied to Moscow's claim that four Soviet ships were damaged in the Haiphong bombing raid.

The note, delivered to Soviet authorities, did not concede that ships had been hit, but said if they were "it was inadvertent and regrettable."

The State Department, noting Soviet arms aid to Hanoi, said, "Countries which supply offensive equipment to the North Vietnamese and enable them to mount an invasion of South Vietnam

share responsibility."

Rogers, the first high administration official to comment publicly on the weekend bombings of the two areas, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the President had three purposes in mind in sending the bombers north:

—To protect American troops in South Vietnam and protect the lives of those troops while the withdrawal program continues.

—To continue the U.S. withdrawal program.

—To insure that the South Vietnamese will be able to defend themselves.

The secretary told the committee the United States has "no intention of permitting North Vietnam to take over South Vietnam by force."

In this line, he said, "I'm not going to make any announcement about what we're not going to do," adding two exceptions:

There will be no reintroduction of U.S. ground combat troops and there will be no use of nuclear weapons in Vietnam.

Otherwise, the President will take whatever action necessary to meet the three conditions that brought about the weekend bombing, Rogers said.

The air raids, the secretary went on, represented no change of policy and followed the pattern Nixon has constantly set out: to take necessary action to protect American troops.

In the face of hostile ques-

tions by committee chairman Sen. J. W. Fulbright, D-Ark., and Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, the secretary said the air raids were confined to military targets.

He added that conditions now indicate the current air war could succeed even though past bombings did not inhibit Hanoi's determination to keep fighting.

This was determined, Rogers declared, by what he called the all-out commitment Hanoi has made to a conventional invasion of the South.

With 12 of their 13 divisions out of North Vietnam, Hanoi's leaders have made such targets as oil supply dumps much more important than in the past, he

contended. In declaring it vital to turn back the current drive, Rogers said also the successful defense of the South could lead to better prospects for settlement.

"We have reason to think," Rogers said, that if the North Vietnamese are convinced the United States won't allow their offensives to succeed, they "may decide its' not worth it to continue fighting."

For the assault to succeed would be a disaster, he said, "resulting in a bloodbath."

In addition, American foreign policy would suffer a major blow through the destabilization of Southeast Asia, he said.

Corps Companies D-2, K-1, Squadron 11 honored Sunday

Companies D-2 and K-1 and Squadron 11 were designated Sunday the outstanding units of A&M's 1971-72 Corps of Cadets.

The units commanded by Michael A. Thompson of Baytown; Sidney C. Hughes Jr., Austin, and Wayne C. Edwards, College Station, were called forward at Parents Day review to receive flags and citation cords indicating honor unit status.

Presentations culminated year-long competition among 36 Army and Air Force units and the Aggie Band for the coveted awards.

Company D-2 received the Gen. George F. Moore award as the best overall unit in the 2,200-member corps, the largest uniformed ROTC corps in the U. S.

The George P. F. Jouine flag for the top record of academic excellence and improvement went to Company K-1. Squadron 11 earned the Bruno A. Hochmuth flag for best scores in marching, inspections, improvement, retention, replacement and participa-

tion in extra-curricular activities.

Edwards, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Edwards, 302 Timber, College Station, also received the outstanding company/squadron commander award.

A special meritorious award was presented to Squadron 3 senior Gary W. Beckcom of San Antonio. For outstanding loyalty, courage and pride, it cited his efforts to overcome an injury received working on the 1969 bonfire and remain in the corps.

The 6th Battalion commanded by Cadet Lt. Col. Larry M. Bragg of Talpa received the President's Flag for the battalion or group with the highest scholastic standing. Company L-1 under Cadet Maj. Michael J. Weynand of Honolulu received the Gen. Spencer J. Buchanan flag and plaque as the best company-sized unit of engineering students. The R. D. Hinton award for the outstanding color guard went to the 1st Brigade.

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